

# **knee scars and how i got them**

**fullfeature**

## knee scars and how i got them by fullfeature

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**Summary:**

Richie feels so much for Eddie that sometimes it gets difficult to be around him, like he's been basking in the sun for too long.

(Richie is so in love, and so unable to say anything.)

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Richie looks out at setting sun across the quarry. To him it seems that if only he could jump the river gap that he could dip his fingers into the molten glow, scoop a bit of sunlight and swallow it down. He can imagine the warmth spreading out to his fingers, crescendoing across his veins, sitting in his heart. He smiles. Distantly, in the back of his mind, he wonders if his mother will look up from her bottles long enough to notice that he is not home yet. Another part of him, the darker part that lingers from a summer years past, wonders how long it would take her to realize if he never came home at all. The sunlight across from him is starting to dim, and the fresh water air is starting to run cold. His thoughts are too. Maybe one day I'll lounge around too long, turn up somewhere downstream ripped apart limb from fuckin' limb. And nobody will be the wiser. I'll go fucking missing.

He turns his eyes to the sky and closes them. His friends would notice. And they'd get him back or die trying. To most this would be some sort of abstract fact, not proven but certainly expressed. It may be dumb luck, past-life mistakes, the wrongs of their fathers, but for some reason the Losers' knew that dying for one another was no abstraction. Instead it was the crunch of It's skull as he brought down a rusty metal bat. It was the fine white line on all their hands. Richie gleans a sick sort of comfort from the sum of these parts. The chill of the night settles into him, breaking him from his own solemn thoughts. The moon is a thin crescent. He gives it a wave. Richie Tozier leaves the quarry smiling, imaging Eddie Spaghetti's face when he climbs through the boy's window.

His imagination does not do the boy justice. It never does. "What are you *doing here?* " Eddie whisper-shouts. He points at the clock on his bedside table with vigor. "My mom is going to kill me. And you!"

Eddie is already dressed for bed. His denim shorts are traded for soft looking plaid pants. His shirt is loose collared, listing to one side and exposing the freckles around his neck. No, Richie's imagination never

does quite measure up. It does give in to all his sick fantasies though: making Eddie's shirt one of his own, having their argument go from whispers in between swats to whispers in between kisses. In reality Eddie pushes his shoulder, demanding a response to a question that Richie had not heard.

"Couldn't leave you hanging, baby." Richie winks. "I have your mom booked for the morning anyway." Eddie goes red. It starts at his cheeks, winds down his throat and sits at the top of his chest. Richie is glad the dark hides his eyes. Eddie shoves him again.

"If you're gonna be like that, *Trashmouth*, then you can fall back out the window." Eddie climbs into bed, his back facing Richie. The bed is the same twin he's had since elementary. Eddie still fits, of course, but it is a tight squeeze for the other Loser boys.

"Don't be like that, Sweets." Richie drapes his arm over Eddie, lying half-on half-off the mattress, still on top of the covers. Eddie turns to him. He rolls his eyes, smiling. That, Richie knows, is Eddie language for ok fine you stupid piece of shit.

"Take your jeans off," Eddie says, fixing his shirt. It'd gone off one shoulder.

"Take me to dinner first." Richie quips. Eddie gives him a warning glare and a mouthed *beep beep*. Richie does as he's told. He gets under the covers this time, putting his arm back into place. "Didn't want you to have to sleep without me, Eds." He says this into the soft skin at the back of Eddie's neck. This is fine. This is normal. This is Eddie&Richie best friends forever till death do they part. Richie tries to convince himself, anyway. Instead his brain says something like: *you could kiss the back of his neck, suck the soft skin into your mouth and leave a mark that means something*. He can't though. Wouldn't.

Once, after It, Eddie had asked them all if someone was willing to stay the night with him. It was Bill who'd gone. Bill with his stutter

and his charm and his uncanny sense of responsibility. Richie had not felt the tendrils of anger then. He had not felt them until after his first night in Eddie Kraspbak's bed. Eddie had looked so small, dressed in soft old clothes and curled into a pillow as he waited for Richie. A fierce wave of protective instincts had rocked him. He'd gotten into the bed and watched Eddie struggle to get comfortable, grasping at his pillow and sighing every few seconds. They'd been a few inches apart, not touching. Richie had yanked the pillow away, facing Eddie's murderous expression with a simple, *hold on to me instead*. And Eddie had. He'd clutched Richie's arm through a nightmare about a leper with a red hole for a nose, waking up only to see Richie's eyes and to feel his skin. Not quite soft--not like Eddie's own, as he used lotion everyday--but not Mike's working hands either. He'd thanked Richie with something akin to awe in his face, and Richie had fallen and fallen and fallen until perhaps a week or so when he finally stood back up.

Now the idea of letting someone else see this Eddie: the one that lets his mouth rest slightly open in sleep, shirt falling off one shoulder again, feet tangled up in his sheets...the idea is enough to have Richie clenching his fists. There was no longer a Losers' Club rotation for Eddie's bed. Instead Richie stayed when he could, when Mrs. K wasn't particularly upset. There aren't that many nightmares anymore, anyway. It has been a long time since Richie has woken up in a cold sweat over Pennywise the Dancing Clown. Instead now when he wakes up in a cold sweat it's because someone found the fucking songbook under his mattress, they found it and they opened it to just the right page where it reads *and this is what i think of you* and somehow they'll know. They'll know it's for Eddie, and they'll know all his thoughts about Eddie's soft pink mouth and small bird-boned hands.

Richie swallows roughly just thinking about it.

Eddie's hand collides with the side of his face. "You're thinking too fucking loud, Tozier." He rolls back over, allowing Richie to fit himself to curve of his back. "You're lucky I'm cold and you're a

heater.”

“Right-o ol’ chap!” Richie says, grinning. This: Richie&Eddie best friends forever until death do they part. That’s enough. There are so many things floating around in Richie’s skull that he feels as if he may burst, but the loudest of them all is how happy he is right here in Eddie Kraspbak’s twin sized bed, his jeans on the desk chair and Eddie’s loose grip on his arm.

He wakes up to Eddie’s alarm blaring just to the right of his ear. The clock says that it is once again time to slave away at Derry High, and Richie groans. He slaps the alarm and turns over to face Eddie, who is blinking rapidly. Eddie shoves his hand unto Richie’s face and swings a leg over him to get ready. Richie lays in bed and pretends not to watch. Richie would put his jeans back on, shrug into a shirt of his that Eddie had stashed away and be done with it. Eddie, on the other hand, goes through an in depth morning routine. He is gone to the bathroom for a few minutes, and Richie takes it upon himself to sift through Eddie’s clothes.

Eddie comes back and rolls his eyes. “I don’t think you’re in any position to tell me what to wear, Tozier.” His hair is combed, still fluffy but tamed. His face has the sheen of just being washed and Richie can smell the moisturizer he’d used. Spice and vanilla.

“I dress well enough for your mom, pretty boy.” Richie sticks his tongue out. Eddie throws him a shirt and starts to strip. Richie quickly turns his attention back to the closet. Eddie was fond of pastel colors, pinks and yellows. His overalls had small rainbow patches, his shirts rested just at the tip of his shorts. It was enough to tempt a man, that was for certain. Richie had become attached to his denim jackets, his black jeans. Next to one another they seemed like they dropped out from an after school special.

“Bill should be here soon,” Eddie says. “Did you forget your backpack again?” Richie had, in fact. He says as much. “Here.” Eddie hands

him a notebook and a pencil. "Can't have you staying stupid forever, can we?"

Richie laughs, grabbing the other boy by the face, "you're lucky you're so cute, Eds." He tugs on the strap of Eddie's white overall and gives him a sloppy kiss on the cheek. He is out the window before he can hear Eddie's complaints.

At school they are in none of the same classes. Richie likes shop class, labs, anything that let's him move around. Eddie likes classes that he can stare out the window and doodle in. They don't see each other except for lunch, frequently meeting beforehand. So when Richie approaches Eddie's locker he is not surprised to see the boy's back, weight rested on one side, hip cocked just slightly. He is playing with the edge of his sock with the tip of his shoe. Richie is going to call out, say something like, *hey baby, you looking like that for me?* But his question is answered. In front of Eddie stands River, someone Richie only knows because Bill has mentioned his batting skills a few times.

Objectively Richie knows that *this* was not the type of batting Bill had been referring to. But River is leaning opposite Eddie, head tilted down with this pleased look on his face. As he gets closer Richie can hear his laugh. *No* is Richie's first thought. *Hell no*. He lengthens his stride, wrapping his arm around Eddie's waist and pulling the boy off his feet for a second. He sets him down, arm still anchoring Eddie to his chest. River stares at him, mouth open with whatever he had been about to say.

"Richie! You have to stop doing that!" Eddie huffs before he relaxes. "Ignore him Riv, he's an ass. What were you gonna ask me?" Riv , Richie glares, why did this kid get a nickname?

"Oh uh," River's face goes through a complicated set of emotions quickly. His eyes dart from Richie's arm, to Eddie's face, down to the length of Eddie's legs, then back up to Richie's glare. He takes a deep breath. "I was wondering if you would wanna go to a horror show on

Saturday?”

Richie tightens his arm, but it only makes Eddie detangle himself from the hold. River meets his eyes. If Richie were less petty he would admire the boy's confidence. “Hm...” Eddie thinks for second. *Say no.* “Sure!” Fuck.

Richie can't see Eddie's face, but he can recognize the sort of wonder on River's. It must be the same way he looks when Eddie is around. “We're gonna miss lunch, pretty boy.” Richie tugs Eddie's arm. The boy says he'll see River later, and Richie feels rather smug, wrapping an arm around Eddie's shoulders. *Sure, Riv, you'll take him out on Saturday, but I'll be in his bed. I'll be the one who walks him home today, and he's held my hand through more than some shitty movie.* Richie turns his face to Eddie, watching the boy for some sort of bashful excitement. It is not there. He breathes a sigh of relief.

“Loverboy and you fucking Saturday?” Eddie pulls away, glaring.

“It's more action than you'll ever get, Trashmouth,” he retorts. “And before you say anything about my mother: beep beep Richie.”

“Me? I would never!” Richie bumps him, and they wave at the rest of the Losers'. The group waves back from their usual lunch table. Bill is dressed in his baseball uniform, arm wrapped around Stan's waist as the boy reads. Bev looks up from her conversation with Ben.

“Eddie! I heard River asked you out, and I heard you said yes!” She gives him a side hug, shrugging when Eddie asks how she found out so fast. “You're a hot topic.”

Richie laughs, “shirt-lifters are always a hot topic.” Stan looks up from his book to deliver the boy a withering look. Bill pats his leg as if to say *he's an idiot, baby.* “We all know Eddie Spaghetti over here



isn't going to give it up, so I don't see what the deal is."

Stan kicks him under the table. "We aren't all sluts, Tozier." Bill is looking between them worriedly, probably wondering if this is going to turn into one of their all out arguments. Unluckily for him Richie is in a fighting mood.

"That's funny, you spread your legs for Big Bill here the same day you had your first kiss, so," Richie can feel the stares from his friends change from wariness to shock. "I don't think you're the authority on purity."

Stan is red, but it is hard to tell if it is the anger or the embarrassment. He cuts off Bill's stuttering of *g-guh-guys hold on n-nuh-now*. "What, are you angry that every girl who touches your dick decides she only needs it once? You must be one mediocre lay, Trashmouth."

Ben puts his head in his hands. Bill looking between them both, confusion written across his features. Richie smirks, "Maybe. Maybe not. You wanna try me on for size, Stanley? I bet you haven't had a satisfying lay--"

Bill slams his hand on the table. "Th-that's e-eh-enough, Richie. Wuh-Whatever has got-gotten into you, tuh-take it auh-away from us."

Richie is up and out of there as soon as Bill is done. He walks out the cafeteria and keeps on walking until he reaches the quad, the grassy area littered with a few students. He sits, resting his back on the brick wall and taking a long breath. When he closes his eyes he sees the tips of Eddie's starch white keds toeing the top of his white socks, the little pink line at the top matching his undershirt. The next thing he sees is River, the boy's blond hair running through the gaps in Eddie's fingers as he holds the smaller boy up by his thighs. They're in the dugout somehow, River's uniform rumpled and red dirt stained in a

way that would make the real life Eddie cringe. This imaginary Eddie does not care, he bares his neck, lets out a little mewl and meets Imaginary-Richie's eyes. His brown eyes are half closed, glazed over in pleasure. His pink lips are wet, plush and soft looking as Imaginary-Eddie smirks.

"Fuck," Real-Richie digs the heels of his hands into his eyes.

From the side he can hear heavy steps, "Rich? That you?" Richie turns to see Mike, his hands pausing, about to light a cigarette. "You ok, buddy?" He draws another stick and sits down, shoulder just brushing Richie's own when he hands the extra over. Mike smells faintly of the barn, where he'd likely just come back from. Apparently Future Farmers of America was a piece of cake when you already lived on a farm.

"Yeah, Mike. I'm doing just fine." Richie sags against the boy, leaning into the lighter flame and taking a drag. Richie closes his eyes and takes a few deep breaths. Mike doesn't say anything for a minute or so, letting his hand clasp around Richie's shoulder in comfort.

When he does speak it is with a small amount of trepidation, as if he is not quite sure he wants to stray down this path. "Is this... the Eddie thing again?" Richie, if it is even possible, sags even more.

"Quite well, Sir Michael," he says, "You've guessed it! I'm here moping about over our young lad! Very poof-y of me, I know." He says it all in his best high class british accent, *know* sounding strange and drawn out. Mike laughs, patting Richie as he stands up.

The lunch bell rings, loud and clear in the quiet. Mike looks up, quirks his eyebrow in a silent *you coming?* Richie shakes his head, blowing a perfect 'o' on his exhale. "Well moping isn't going to solve your problem, Richinald. I think I've said that before though," Mike laughs again, bidding Richie a goodbye, stomping his cigarette out

under his boot.

Mike had indeed said that before. It's his go-to advice when Richie starts talking about Eddie, usually followed by something along the lines of *you miss every shot you don't take, Tozier*. Which, objectively, is great advice. Except that advice was given to Richie, meaning he won't ever take it. Eddie is... an amalgamation of Richie's best friend, partner in crime, and the love of his life. Eddie is... irreplaceable.

So, while there is nothing Richie would love more than to pour out everything he's ever felt right into Eddie's lap, the cost is too high. Richie can watch Eddie flirt with boys and have fun. The inevitable slow dissolution of their friendship over Richie's unrequited feelings? That's not something he thinks he'll ever be equipped to handle.

#### **Author's Note:**

There is a plot in here somewhere, but i lost it? It might come back, but for now this is shelved? I think.

unless like yall have ideas

anyway! I hope you enjoyed that! I love Contemplative Richie. Best boy.